Amendments to the Specification:

On page 1, before line 1, INSERT, the following paragraph:

This application claims priority to prior U.S. application 09/829,936, filed April 11, 2001, now abandoned, which claims priority benefit of international PCT application PCT/FR99/02465, filed October 12, 1999, which claims priority benefit of U.S. provisional application 60/132,331, filed May 3, 1999, and priority to French application FR 98/12754 filed October 12, 1998, each of which are specifically incorporated herein by reference to the full extent allowed.

On page 26, before line 1, REPLACE the section heading with the following heading:

~~Legend to the figures~~ Brief Description of the Drawings

On page 26, before line 12, REPLACE the description of Figure 4 with the following paragraph:

~~Figure 4 : Comparison of the protein sequences encoded y the Mmbp1 (murine) and hMBP1 (human) cDNAs.~~ Figure 4a and 4b : Comparison of the protein sequences encoded by the mMBP1 (murine) and hMBP1 (human) cDNAs. As indicated, the murine sequence begins with a signal sequence SEQ ID NO. 34 and the human sequence begins with a signal sequence SEQ ID NO. 35, and the coding regions are SEQ ID NO. 16 for the murine sequence and SEQ ID NO. 22 for the human sequence.

On page 53, the paragraph beginning at line 1, REPLACE the paragraph with the following paragraph:

The cDNA encoding the C-terminal part of the murine mbp1 protein was cloned by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) on the DNA of the murine embryo SUPERSCRIPT™ library (8.5 days) (Gibco BRL) using the 3'-mMBP1 oligonucleotide and the SP6 oligonucleotide (Gibco BRL).

On page 53, the paragraph beginning at line 27 and continuing to page 54, REPLACE the paragraph with the following paragraph:

The sequence of the murine MBP1 gene was used for a search for homology in GenBank. This search made it possible to show a strong homology with the sequence of a human EST (g1548384). From this sequence, two cDNA fragments were cloned by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) on the DNA of the human testicle SUPERSCRIPT™ library using the 3'-hMBP1 and SP6 oligonucleotides (Gibco BRL), on the one hand, and the 5'-hMBP1 and T7 oligonucleotides (Gibco BRL), on the other hand.